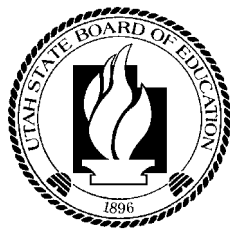


**The Report of the  
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Highland High School  
2166 South 1700 East  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106**

**November 5-6, 2003**



Utah State Office of Education  
250 East 500 South  
P.O. Box 144200  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

**THE REPORT OF THE  
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**Highland High School  
2166 South 1700 East  
Salt Lake City, UT 84106**

**November 5-6, 2003**

**UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

**DIVISION OF  
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**Salt Lake City, Utah**

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## **FOREWORD**

A major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate inservice growth and school improvement. Consequently, requirements include not only meeting the standards of the Utah State Office of Education, but also completing a school evaluation every six years.

School evaluation is that effort by the local school staff to take a comprehensive look at the school's program, operation, and effect. The school determines how closely its purposes and philosophy coincide with its actual practices and the degree to which its stated objectives are being reached. It is a three-phased program: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, November 5-6, 2003, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to meet the requirements referred to above.

The entire staff of Highland High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the Visiting Team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Kenneth Powell is commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for the generally fine program being provided for Highland High School students, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more adequately meet the needs of the students of Highland High School.

Steven O. Laing, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent  
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**Twila B. Affleck**

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*\*Board of Regents Appointments*

*10/30/03*

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**HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF**

**School Administration**

Kenneth Powell..... Principal  
Gene Bonella..... Assistant Principal  
Mary Margaret Williams..... Assistant Principal

**Counseling**

Jan Adams..... Counselor  
Cheryl Benson..... Counselor  
Doreen Carey ..... Counselor  
Karrie Jarratt ..... Counselor  
Greg Steed..... Counselor

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Ramez Atiya	John Craigle	Thomas Jaeckel
Clint Barnes	Robert Curry	Chris Jenson
Erlene Barney	Wendy Curtis	Lew Jeppson
Brooke Barrigar	Paul Cutrer	Doug Jorgensen
Stephanie Barthelow	Catherine Davis	Tom Kingsford
Kerrie Baughman	Katherine D’Emal	Lori Kopasz
Rebecca Bennion	Carolyn Ebert	Loyda Kyremes
Brody Benson	Pat Eddington	Gulliver LaValle
Hilary Bertagnole	Katie Eskelson	Jill Lemmon
Eric Bliss	Mary Evans-Lopez	Frank L’Etoile
Kyle Bracken	Nancy Folland-Wilmot	Bob Lyman
Warren Brodhead	Monica French	James Malungahu
Marie Burns	Amy Gardner	Wayne McQuivey
John Caldwell	Rob Gardner	Ann Mihlfeith
Ruth Campbell	Linda Gentry	Gordon Moore
Gayle Cannon	Bruce Grable	Gail Murdock
Joe Chenworth	Ray Groth	Lynn Newman
Janene Christensen	Bob Hardy	John Newman
Andy Clark	Cleveland Hayes	Linda Newman
Roy Corsi	Sandra Horch	Monique Nielsen

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Charlie Paulos  
Jeff Rogers  
Dan Shwam  
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Robert Stevens  
Sue Stone  
Emily Strick  
Kathy Stringham  
Doug Tate  
Paul Tate  
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Jason Thomas  
Scott Thomas

Sue Tice  
Elaine Toronto  
John Vallentine  
Lucie Vance  
Jean VanderToolen  
Molly Welch  
Keith West  
Jennifer Weston  
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JoAnn McKee  
Karen Nicholson  
Anne Peterson  
Nancy Pierson  
Stephanie Watts  
Carolynn Westenskow

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Claudia Bellamy  
Betty Carman  
Jodi Fellows  
Mike Gallegos  
Kerry Hardy  
Jennie Herrera  
Tana Hunter  
Jack Kener  
Larry Kershaw  
Karen Klc  
Marcia Le Blanc  
Shauna Lingman  
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Arturo Torres

Laurah Sullivan  
Diana Wiseman

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Crystal Watson

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Melissa Crandall  
Charisse Fuhrman  
Megan Gebhard  
David Gilbert  
Angela Grimm  
Shemay Gunther  
Jody Jackson  
Jessica Kidd  
Kathryn Loyberg  
Ann Maloy  
Kiri Maxfield  
Mariah Maxfield  
Jessica Molina  
Chris Mortensen  
Chantelle Penrod  
Sharon Quist  
Dawn Thibault

Colette Treager  
Jennifer Tucker  
Janie Varner  
Megan Worsham

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Delia Garcia  
Bonnie Fulger  
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Rina Rodriquez  
Rosario Tovar  
Ashley Werner

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Robert Bartak  
Basillo Castellmos  
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Aaron Dalton  
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Dustin Heath  
Matthew Lilly  
Robert Martinez  
Patrick Moray  
Joyce Phillips  
Dennis Russell  
Duston Service



# **HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**Committing minds to inquiry and expression**

**Hearts to Compassion**

**And Lives to the Service of Humanity**

## **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

- We believe all students can learn.
- We believe students learn best when actively engaged in the learning process.
- We believe students share the responsibility for learning with the entire community.
- We believe values influence learning and that learning influences values.
- We believe in a safe, accepting, and stimulating learning environment.
- We believe a relevant education challenges students to think, and solve problems creatively.
- We believe accountability is essential.
- We believe knowledge empowers.

## **MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

Gloria Merrill, Murray High School, Murray School District,  
Visiting Team Chairperson

Owen Denison, Kearns High School, Granite School District

Larry D. Johnson, Hurricane High School, Washington County School District

Susan Anderson, Grand County High School, Grand County School District

Marsha Forsgren, Uintah High School, Uintah School District

Vicci Gappmayer, Wasatch High School, Wasatch School District

Susan B. Burns, Weber High School, Weber School District

Mary E. Moulton, Uintah High School, Uintah School District

# **VISITING TEAM REPORT**

## **HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL**

### **CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE**

Highland High School is an urban high school located on the east side of Salt Lake City, Utah. Highland High School has a strong academic program and appears with ten other Utah high schools on *Newsweek's* recent list of the top four percent of American high Schools (*Newsweek*, June 2, 2003). There are many high-performing students and many low-performing students, with a wide gap between the two groups. The administration and staff have initiated many student recognition programs. On October 1, 2002, the population was 1,990 students in grades 9 through 12. Highland High School reached its peak enrollment of 2,148 students in November of 1999. While most of the populations have remained relatively stable over the past decade, there have been significant increases in free lunch, mobility, and non-native English speakers.

The climate at Highland High School is extremely warm and inviting. Students feel safe and are happy to be at Highland High School. Teachers and administrators are very friendly and helpful. Highland High School has an experienced, dedicated staff that works well together.

Highland High School has a very diverse population, with 38 percent of the students having a minority background. Thirty-two percent of the students are non-native English speakers, and there are over 70 languages spoken by students at Highland High School. Thirty-two percent of the population comes from single-family homes, 49 percent of the students qualify for free lunch, and 41 percent of the students qualify for fee waivers. Twenty-seven percent of the students qualify for the school bus or UTA, 28 percent of the students have transferred within the district, and 10 percent of the students are involved in the resource program.

Highland High School is very active in grant writing and in 2002 received the Eccles-Annenberg Challenge grant, which has allowed faculty members to work on projects that will improve student learning.

a) *What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?*

The administrative and accreditation team has made a significant effort to collect student achievement data to help determine who is learning and who is not learning at Highland High School. The paid lunch students scored significantly higher on CRT tests than students on free/reduced-price lunch. The ELL and Special Education populations score well below the school average. In recent years, school test scores have shown a slow decline that reflects the change in the

ELL population. Highland High School is beginning to address these areas of concern by using action research to determine whether teaching reading strategies will increase reading comprehension.

Highland High School has a strong academic program, with emphasis on AP classes. The AP program is available to all students, and there were 900 student requests for AP classes in 2003. The SAT 9 reading and language arts scores show consistent scores slightly above the national average.

*b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

Highland High School is strongly encouraged to continue to systematically collect and analyze pertinent student data to guide decisions made by the school. It is suggested that the administrative staff collaborate with the district in designing an effective management system that can be utilized by different stakeholders within the school community. This effort should include data not included in the profile (i.e., daily attendance, trancies and tardies, course grades, graduation rates, drop-out rates, and disciplinary referrals). In addition, the staff should identify student achievement gaps by subgroups (i.e., gender, ethnicity, grade level, socio-economic status, etc.).

The Visiting Team would suggest that the school leadership team consider the following questions: Does Highland High School have students who attend regularly, but are not performing? Are students who participate in school activities more likely to achieve? Are there patterns or trends in attendance and achievement that can be attributed to certain grade levels, ethnicities, or subject areas?

**Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:**

- The Visiting Team recommends that Highland High School continue to collect and analyze pertinent data with all of the stakeholders as part of the school improvement process.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Highland High School identify a means of measuring the effectiveness of school goals or proposed focus group activities.
- Highland High School should use the information gleaned from the analyzing the data to drive future decisions regarding staff development, curriculum development, and student assessment.

## CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

The school leadership team made a concerted effort to engage in a collaborative self-study. The information included was primarily centered on student achievement. Some of the departmental reports were created without the input or buy-in of all department members, and limited information was gleaned from the parental, student, and teacher surveys.

As the Visiting Team interviewed staff, parents, and students, it was apparent that some stakeholders were not involved in the process of developing the DRSLs. In addition, many of the stakeholders are not aware of how the DRSLs will be used to drive the work of the school during the next six years.

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The information provided focused on school programs, PTA involvement, student ethnicity, and student achievement data with socioeconomic, ethnic, and special needs factors disaggregated. This information provides evidence of the challenges Highland High School has with declining enrollment and increasing diversity in the school. It also shows the school's strength in including excellent programs to help every student achieve. Highland High School has an enviable amount of parental support and a capable, caring staff. Some strengths of the school that were omitted from the study were the student recognition programs and business partnerships.

Departmental reports were written in a positive voice, but lack candor regarding areas that need attention. The Visiting Team would suggest that each department spend time reviewing the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) rubrics for the Survey of Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness. This would allow each department to clearly understand its present level, and help the department set goals for future improvement.

### **CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Highland High School's desired results for student learning are as follows:

1. Compassion
  - Exemplifying kindness to others
  - Respecting diverse opinions and cultures
  - Demonstrating tolerance for others
2. Academic Excellence
  - Becoming a complex thinker and problem solver
  - Communicating effectively
    - Reading with comprehension
    - Writing with command
    - Speaking with clarity
    - Listening with intent
  - Exploring and appreciating the arts
  - Developing a lifelong commitment to education and learning
3. Citizenship
  - Participating as an active and ethical citizen in local and world communities
  - Upholding positive values; including honesty, integrity, responsibility, restraint, and service
  - Working productively, both independently and cooperatively

#### **Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:**

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

There is evidence that the school leadership team made a significant effort to involve all of the staff members of Highland High School in creating a shared vision for the school. Other stakeholders were invited to participate, but there is little evidence that they took advantage of the opportunity. Highland High School enjoys an exceptional cohesiveness among staff members, and there is evidence that most faculty members support the mission and belief statements of the school.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The school's belief statements address some of the key issues pertinent to the academic success of the students of Highland High School. They are broad in scope and encompass the needs of all students. The school's belief statements address key issues pertinent to effective decision making and policy development in the school.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

The mission statement, beliefs, and desired results for student learning are well aligned. However, while the DRSLs are admirable, they are not measurable and could not be attained within a reasonable time line. Highland High School may consider refining the DRSLs to be more concise and measurable.

### **Curriculum Development:**

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

Highland High School received an Eccles-Annenberg Challenge grant in January of 2002, and through faculty member study groups many innovative reform efforts were started.

Within the individual departments, it is apparent that the staff is working collaboratively to align their curricula with the State Core Curriculum. Individuals within all the departments have begun to write curriculum maps to align their curricula with each other as well. We commend those individuals who are taking an innovative approach to aligning departmental curricula and the Core Curriculum. The Visiting Team recommends that the staff continue to complete and update their individual curriculum maps so they can be used to help align their curricula to the State Core.

The Visiting Team further recommends that Highland High School use curriculum mapping as a tool to design effective instruction, to formulate authentic assessment, and to create a variety of instructional activities.

Highland High School should continue its development of departmental and schoolwide rubrics for writing and literacy. The staff has indicated that they are beginning to meet as teams and are beginning conversations regarding the integration of curricula across the departments. The Visiting Team recommends that all teachers be brought into the discussions on best practices, and in particular the implementation of integrated curricula. As Highland High School begins to focus on measurable DRSLs, common assessment tools need to be developed and implemented schoolwide.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

The Visiting Team commends the efforts of several of the departments in the development of a Ninth Grade Project. The staff should further develop projects such as these to meet the needs of all students in the school.

The faculty of Highland High School has begun conversations about how to explicitly teach the desired results for student learning. Many individuals stated that they are teaching their subject matter while incorporating the DRSLs; others are not.

While desired results for student learning have been identified, the staff must come to a consensus on the importance of these outcomes. The staff must outline explicitly how desired results for student learning will be taught in the individual classes across the content areas. The Visiting Team recommends that the staff meet to narrow and refine the DRSLs, and then implement those DRSLs into their respective curricula. Measurement of the success of the desired outcomes needs to be developed by the entire staff.

#### **Quality Instructional Design:**

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

The Visiting Team commends Highland High School for eliminating the restrictions for entry into honors and AP classes. Any student who desires entrance into one of these classes is given the opportunity to increase his/her learning. We also commend the English Department for coordination of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade English so that all students receive the same instruction from every teacher. While observing classes in a number of departments, it was obvious that the staff is aware of effective instructional strategies and corresponding activities that are aligned with the performance expectations and standards for students. While many teachers are very effective with varying methods, the Visiting Team recommends that all teachers continue to explore “best practices” that will actively engage students in learning.

Highland High School is commended on its efforts to implement before- and after-school tutoring programs. More students should be encouraged by the faculty to take advantage of these programs. The Visiting Team encourages Highland to continue to develop more programs, extending beyond the grant, that encourage all students to be successful.



- b) *To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

The Visiting Team observed teachers using cooperative teaching strategies, group work, demonstrations, direct instruction, Socratic questioning, storytelling, discussion, previewing, modeling, student presentations, visual aids, technology-aided instructions, experiments, use of manipulatives, and hands-on activities. It was obvious that the teachers were consciously aware of the need to vary the activities and instructional strategies to meet the needs of the individual students within the classroom.

Highland High School is encouraged to include special needs students in the regular classroom in all curricular areas. The ESL Department is commended for its attention to research-based instructional strategies. The Visiting Team observed that some staff members struggle with having all the necessary skills and understanding the diverse needs of all students. This may be an area of future staff development.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

Highland High School received a federal grant that provides financial support for the before- and after-school programs. Students can participate in this program, which provides tutoring, homework assistance, and enrichment or recreational classes before and after school. Additionally, teachers are willing to stay after school to assist students when they struggle with difficult concepts, assignments, homework, and personal needs. The Visiting Team commends the dedication of this staff for creating additional educational opportunities for those students in need.

The lines of communication between the faculty and community educational personnel need to be established. They are a valuable resource to enhance student learning and success.

### **Quality Assessment Systems:**

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or schoolwide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

There is little evidence that Highland High School has clearly defined the type of achievement to be assessed or the performance standards for evaluating the quality of students' achievement. However, some departments have made noticeable efforts to create assessments of student learning that are aligned with Highland High's DRSLs.

The staff is encouraged to continue the process of developing assessments to measure their DRSLs. In addition, Highland High School could begin to develop common assessment tools within each department.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

There is strong evidence that the staff uses multiple assessments in their classes to evaluate student performance. Assessments observed by the Visiting Team included oral presentations, individual and group projects, portfolios, open-ended questions, and group assignments. Also, there is collaboration between departments such as ESL and Social Studies using various assessments to encourage student learning.

The Visiting Team would suggest that each department develop common assessments at the end of each quarter to identify students' progress. Using common assessments would help identify students who are failing and allow each department to reflect on methods to improve student achievement.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

Students at Highland High were very positive about what they were learning and aware of the expectations and grading policies for each teacher, and felt that they were assessed fairly.

The school administration and leadership team are encouraged to collect data from standardized tests and disaggregate the assessment results with all staff members. Using the data from department assessments and standardized test results will lead to better instructional decisions. Some departments are beginning to analyze data derived from standardized tests to drive decision making within their departments.

### **Leadership for School Improvement:**

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

Students feel valued and important at Highland High School, and their teachers and the school administration recognize their accomplishments. Highland High School has a long tradition of academic excellence, and the community, administration, and teachers continue to have high expectations for all students.

The decision-making process is collaborative, and the school's stakeholders have the opportunity for meaningful involvement. The administration actively supports

teachers in their individual and group quests for improved instruction and student learning.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision-making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

Some of the decisions made by the school are based on validated, researched-based practices. However, the administration needs to play a more active role in guiding the teacher-led Eccles-Annenberg Committee and Accreditation Steering Committee in aligning the decisions with the school's goals. It may be more effective to have the entire school working together on one or two main areas of staff development.

- c) *To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

Highland High School has not developed a system for monitoring instructional effectiveness. Some departments are beginning to evaluate data to improve student learning. The Highland High School administration could develop a system of schoolwide, departmental, and individual reflection on best practices that would support interventions to improve student learning.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

Parents, students, and staff members feel safe at Highland High School. The school is clean and well kept. The Highland High School administrative team has developed appropriate schoolwide policies and operational procedures that are designed to maximize opportunities for successful learning. The administrative team works well together and they have earned the respect and support of the faculty and staff.

It is commendable that Highland High School has 94 percent regular attendance, and the attendance monitoring procedures are very efficient. However, the school should address the tardy problem, and the Visiting Team would suggest that a schoolwide policy be enforced.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources that align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?*

The allocation and use of resources are usually aligned with the school's goals. It may be possible to refocus some of the staff development and grant monies into focus groups that are directly related to improving student learning.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

Highland High School has developed many successful business partnerships. The business members participate in the internship program for Highland High School students, as well as offering financial support for a variety of academic and activity programs. The PTSA and School Community Council strongly support Highland High School and the school goals. The PTSA sponsors many programs to help students and parents feel welcome at Highland High School. There were a few parents who expressed the feeling that sometimes their concerns were not addressed by the administration.

**Community Building:**

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

Highland High School has worked hard to create a learning environment that nurtures a sense of caring and belonging. For example, 32 percent of the students are non-native English speakers. Each time a new student arrives at Highland High School, another student who speaks the same language welcomes him or her. The PTSA's newsletter communicates in both Spanish and English, and is mailed to every student's home. The PTSA has also developed a clothing closet from which disadvantaged students can receive new or nearly new clothing items. Local doctors and dentists have provided free care to students in need. The Community Education and Learning Plus program also provides clothing and food, and connects families to the appropriate agencies within the community.

There is a positive and productive relationship among students, teachers, support staff, and the administration. It seemed to the Visiting Team that the Community-building Focus Group addressed items that were not directly related to student learning.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

Highland High School reaches out to most parents and families to help engage them as partners in the learning process. The school is beginning to have dialogue with the junior high schools that feed into Highland High School, and the Visiting Team would recommend that this dialogue continue so that a collegial relationship can be developed.

Highland High School currently has 23 businesses active in the Partners in Education program. There are 50 to 100 students involved in internship programs throughout the city. Highland High School has a Teacher Academy in which students interested in education as a profession can further their learning at Westminster College and the University of Utah. There is also a Health Occupations partnership with the University of Utah available to students pursuing a career in the health or medical field.

### **Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:**

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

Highland High School is actively involved in staff development based on the Eccles-Anneberg plan, which currently includes (but is not limited to) successful collaborative learning communities with new and established faculty from all areas of the curriculum, a curriculum mapping project, presentation of best practices, literacy coaches who are trained to train other faculty, etc. However, the Visiting Team suggests that staff development would be more effective if all faculty members participated.

Highland High School faculty meetings are held once a month. School business and other current issues are addressed in an hour or less. Teachers participate in professional development training based on perceived needs. The administration supports such efforts through the allocation of time and resources as provided by the district or other opportunities. It was not clear when and how the professional development occurs.

It seems that department meetings are held based on issues that are determined by department members. Some departments meet weekly, and other departments seldom meet. No evidence was presented that the discussions or training are data-driven. It is suggested that staff development efforts should define and focus on the DRSLs.

The Visiting Team recommends that professional development include attention to the Schoolwide Indicators of Quality as defined by NSSE.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

The Highland High School administration empowers its faculty to make site-based decisions, and teachers are receptive to ideas presented. It was evident to the Visiting Team that the school administration supports the staff, and the staff

appears to support its leaders. It is also clear that there appears to be a strong desire to do what is best for students.

The Visiting Team sees a need to develop a clearer schoolwide plan for improvement focused on student learning. Additionally, more data-driven, research-based information should be used to dictate the school's direction. The staff should consider incorporating concrete ideas into their action plan. They should continue to look at formal as well as informal assessments to collect data to verify that teaching strategies assure student learning.

#### **CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI**

##### **Standard I – Educational Program**

Highland High School offers an excellent education program for students at all levels. The standard is met.

##### **Standard II – Student Personnel Services**

This standard is met.

##### **Standard III – School Plant and Equipment**

This standard is met.

##### **Standard IV – Library Media Program**

This standard is met.

##### **Standard V – Records**

This standard is met.

##### **Standard VI – School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)**

This standard is met.

##### **Standard VII – Preparation of Personnel**

This standard is met.

### **Standard VIII – Administration**

This standard is met.

### **Standard IX – Teacher Load**

This standard is not met. Highland High School has 42 teachers with more than 160 students. This is a common occurrence with the AB Block schedule.

### **Standard X – Activities**

This standard is met.

### **Standard XI – Business Practices**

This standard is met.

## **CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN**

- a) *To what extent is the schoolwide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

Highland High School has divided its action plan into three major components: Advocacy, Literacy, and Collaboration. Each component is subdivided into several different areas of concern. While all of the concerns are admirable and worthy of attention, Highland High School needs to focus these concerns into measurable, achievable goals. These goals need to be driven by the data. In particular, advocacy needs to be more clearly defined and delineated into a more measurable plan of action.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and system wide?*

Highland High School faculty and staff members are commended for their commitment to the students and school. Although all staff members have not participated in the development of the action plan through focus groups, the staff is willing to support any program that directly benefits students and student achievement.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the schoolwide action plan appear to be?*

Highland High School developed an action plan and timeline. However, some of the items listed were not related to student learning, and in other cases it would be difficult to measure progress on the goals within the action plan. A concrete method of assessing data needs to be developed in order to evaluate the success of the action plan and goals.

## **CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

### **Commendations:**

- Highland High School has a cohesive, comfortable, safe, inviting learning environment.
- The Visiting Team commends Highland High School for using a variety of research-based instructional strategies.
- Highland High School is commended for beginning to develop collaboration between departments.
- The faculty of Highland High School is highly qualified, and the Visiting Team commends Highland High School for having every teacher endorsed in the subject area he/she teaches.
- The Visiting Team commends Highland High School for tearing down barriers and allowing all students into advanced classes.
- The Visiting Team commends the school on implementing schoolwide reading and writing strategies.
- The Air Force Junior ROTC Department is commended for involving all students and encouraging unity at Highland High School.
- The Visiting Team commends the faculty on sincerely caring about their students and each other.

### **Recommendations:**

- The Visiting Team recommends that Highland High School continue to analyze data to assist in defining measurable short- and long-term goals.



- The Visiting Team recommends that Highland High School define advocacy so that every department will be striving to reach the same goal and it will be easier to measure success.
- Highland High School administration should take the lead in the School Improvement process and work with the school leadership team to set annual goals for staff development.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school adopt a plan to address the tardy problem at Highland High School.